

## Computer Care

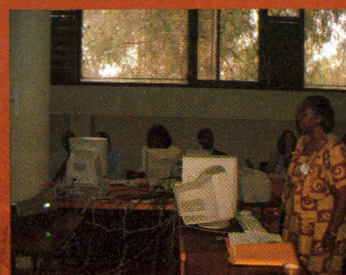
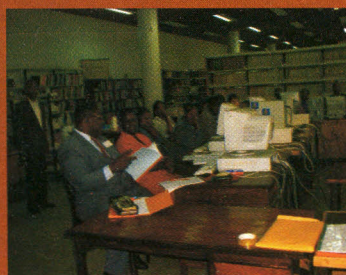
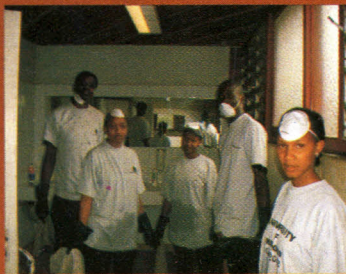
In this age of information technology, computers are everywhere, in offices, in houses, in laboratories, and it's appropriate to pose the question "Are the computers given the necessary care and maintenance they require? If so, who does it?"

What are the basic steps we should take to enable our computers last longer?

Heat is the greatest enemy to a computer system. It causes the internal components and chips to wear out. Heat also lowers the performance of the computer. Computers should therefore be kept in places without direct heat or sunrays.

Dust is the second enemy to a computer system. Think of dust as a blanket, which keeps the chips and other internal components of a computer hot. The more dust, the hotter they get. Dust also reduces airflow within the computer system. Computers should therefore be cleaned (wiped) for dust and other debris on a daily basis. The ordinary duster is sufficient for this purpose. However proper cleaning is required once in a while (say after two months). It is recommended that the inside of a computer system (CPU) is cleaned at least twice a year using a vacuum cleaner, while the inside of a monitor is cleaned after every two years. This type of cleaning requires the services of a computer expert. The computer covers also need to be cleaned.

Liquid is the third enemy of a computer system. No meals should be allowed next to the computer system. Users are tempted to take tea while working on the computer systems. This kind of behavior should be discouraged. The other enemies are computer furniture, ventilation, magnetism, power fluctuations and covering materials. It is recommended that computers be placed on flat surfaces (tables) or proper computer furniture. Computers that are placed in slanting position affect the internal components. Ventilation around a computer system is important. A computer system should have enough space behind for ventilation. Magnets can cause permanent loss of data on hard or floppy disks. It is important to keep anything magnetic away from computers and floppy disks too. Problems of power can be caused by over-voltage, under-voltage, power blackouts and surges. To prevent power problems, surge protectors and power backups (e.g. UPS) should be used.



When it comes to software, care should be taken to avoid viruses. Viruses may enter a computer system through diskettes or through the Internet. Diskettes should always be scanned for viruses before use. Hard drives should be regularly scanned for viruses. Here, a recommendation of two weeks is advised. All programs downloaded from the Internet should be scanned for viruses. The latest anti-virus (virus scanner) software should be installed in a computer system and updated every fortnight.

#### *TIPS ON COMPUTER CARE:*

- Place the computer on a flat surface (table).
- The computer should not be kept in a place with direct heat or sunrays.
- The computer should have enough space behind for ventilation.
- Regularly clean the computer for dust and other debris.
- Remove dust from the inside surfaces of a CPU at least twice a year.
- Clean the inside of a monitor every two years.
- Do not spill any liquids into a computer system.
- Keep anything magnetic away from computer systems.
- Use surge protectors and power backups to prevent power problems.
- Scan diskettes for viruses before use.
- Scan hard drives for viruses every fortnight.
- Update the anti-virus program every fortnight.
- Scan all programs that are downloaded from the Internet.
- Handle the computers safely and with care
- Cover the computer with clean covering materials.

The responsibility of taking care of the computer lies with the user of the computer (i.e. the person who uses the computer). Your computer system will last for a long time and give you good service if you take good care of it and follow the above simple suggestions to prevent problems occurring. Repair costs as well as purchases for new computer systems will go down. Computer breakdowns and work interruptions as a result of the breakdowns will be minimized.

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